

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the first paragraph on page 1, with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention relates to an improvement in a netting system, and relates more particularly, to improvements in mesh netting whereby the mesh is capable of being made of ~~taught~~ taut around a frame through the intermediary of a shrinkable net fiber which has a reduced length when wetted and then dried.

Please replace the second paragraph on page 2 beginning at line 7 with the following amended paragraph:

The invention resides in a method and apparatus for tensioning a net which is made taut by wetting the net material such that the material shrinks when wetted and dried. More specifically, the invention resides in a net system comprising a frame having at least two opposing frame members and a net extending therebetween. The net is made from a material of cords of a water soluble yarn capable of high shrinkage rates when wetted with water and dried. A means may be provided along one of the frame sides for causing tensioning of localized regions in the net.

Please replace the third paragraph on page 2 beginning at line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

The invention further resides in a method of tensioning a net to a frame by providing the net with a border, providing the net from a material of cords of a water soluble yarn capable of high shrinkage rates when wetted with water and dried, ~~[[and]]~~ sizing the net ~~larger~~ to be larger than the ~~[[frame]]~~ frame, ~~[[and]]~~ mounting the net onto the frame such that the border is located outside of the ~~[[frame]]~~ frame, and wetting the net and allowing it to dry such that the net shrinks around the frame taking up play otherwise existing prior to the wetting step.

Please replace the 11th paragraph on page 3 beginning at line 21 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 9b illustrates the same as Fig. 9a but from the other side.

Please replace the 2nd paragraph on page 4 beginning at line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 10b illustrates the rope of Fig. 10a except open for ~~the~~ further clarity.

Please replace the 7th paragraph on page 4 beginning at line 13 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 15 illustrates another ~~an~~ end to end splice of a twisted rope.

Please replace the 1st paragraph on page 5 beginning at line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of net 2, consisting of an outer border 4 and tucked construction, however, cross-lock construction is also possible, and a material in addition to that disclosed in this invention can also be used, such as a core in a web rope, or a blend rope. The net 2 further is comprised of vertically extending weft members 6, 6 and horizontally extending warp members 8, 8 which intersect together with one another at intersections or nodes 10, 10. The weft 6 and warp 8 ~~member~~ members are made in whole or in part from a shrinkable material which will be discussed in greater detail later with respect to TABLES A and B below.

Please replace the 3rd paragraph on page 5 beginning at line 25 with the following amended paragraph:

As seen in Fig. 3, in lieu of using eyebolts 12, 12 exclusively around the perimeter of the frame 5, the number of eyebolts 12, 12 can be reduced by using a tensioning bar 22 provided along opposed side lengths of the border member 4. In the case of the vertical ~~[[side]]~~ sides of the border 4, the tensioning bar 22 is threaded between the warp members 8, 8 and in the case of the horizontal sides of the border 4, the tensioning bar is threaded between the weft members 6, 6. The use of the tensioning bars 22, 22 allows for less securement points to be used between the frame and the net because the bars provide a longer contact surface against which the border 4 acts, as opposed to the single point contact which ~~[[exits]]~~ exists with the direct eyebolt connection of Fig. 2. In addition, it should be seen that only one of the two opposing sides requires securement through eyebolt connection, thereby allowing the other opposite side to be secured via, for example a lashing connection 24 as shown along the bottom side of the net in Fig. 3.

Please replace the 2nd paragraph on page 6 beginning at line 10 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Figures 4a and 4b, it should be seen that the net 2 of the present invention is made from a material which comprises at least portions of the weft and warp members 6 and 8 and is capable of shrinking in ~~[[sized]]~~ size once wetted. This material is better referred to as water soluble shrinkable yarns which react to wetting by reduction in length, up to the point where strain is imposed on the yarns by, for example, an outside force, such as ~~produced~~, produced by reacting against a rigid frame.

Please replace the 3rd paragraph on page 11 beginning at line 28 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Figs. 9a and 9b, a structure of anode 10 is shown. The node 10 in Fig. 9a shows the intersection of weft and warp members 6 and 8. Here weft ~~members~~ member 6 passes through warp member 8 at point 50 while warp member 8 passes through weft member 6 at point 52. When wetted and allowed to dry in the manner discussed above and

set forth in detail in Tables A and B, the cross passing through of weft and warp members 6 and 8 prior to wetting causes a highly effective lock to be created.

Please replace the 2nd paragraph on page 12 beginning at line 5 with the following amended paragraph:

The end structure shown in Figs. 10a and 10b ~~illustrate~~ illustrates end of one of the warp or weft members which is capable of being connected through a retaining rod 22 such as shown in Fig. 3 or, alternatively, piercing through a border member as disclosed above with respect to Fig. 8. However, in this embodiment, it should be seen that the end 60 of the member 6/8 pierces back on itself through one cord of the rope at 64 and 65 after forming a loop 62 and then again pierces back on itself in an opposite 180° direction at point 66. By way of reference, such a double back type connected is disclosed in commonly owned U.S. Patent No. 5,622,094 entitled "Hollow Braid Net and Method of Making" issued on April 22, 1997 filed in the name of John Rexroad and filed on March 30, 1995 as application Serial No. 08/414,185, and which application being commonly owned with the Applicant of the present invention and is hereby incorporated reference. When wetted and allowed to dry in the manner discussed above and set forth in detail in Tables A and B, the formation of end 60 of the member 6/8 piercing back on itself through one cord of the rope at 64 and 65 after forming a loop 62 and then again pierces back on itself in an opposite 180° direction at point 6 prior to wetting causes ~~[[the]]~~ a lock to be created in a highly effective manner.

Please replace the 3rd paragraph on page 12 beginning at line 30 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Fig. 11, it should be seen that the connection shown in Fig. 11 is ~~that of the same as~~ shown in Figs. 9a and 9b, except that the material used as the weft and warp members 6 and 8 is that of a braided rope rather than a twisted one. Notwithstanding, intersection 10 is caused by the weft member 6 passing through the warp member 8 and then the warp member 8 passing through the weft member 6. It ~~is further~~ should be further understood that the braided rope illustrated by the members 6 and 8 can be made completely

of the shrinkable cord material of ~~[[the]]~~ Tables A and B above or can be braided with strands thereof which allows the member to have a soft touch such as when formed as a composite with a microfilament material. When wetted and allowed to dry in the manner discussed above and set forth in detail in Tables A and B, the formation of intersection ~~[[10]]~~ 10, prior to ~~wetting~~ wetting, is caused by the weft member 6 passing through the warp member 8 and then the warp member 8 passing through the weft ~~member 6 is caused to lock on itself in a highly effective manner~~ member 6. In this embodiment, the passed through weft and warp members 6 and 8 create a highly effective lock.

Please replace the 2nd paragraph on page 13 beginning at line 17 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring now to Fig. 12, it should be seen that a splice 80 of a braided rope is shown. This splice 80 is made between two end to end pieces whose distal ends are shown at 82 and 84. Braided rope illustrated as 86 is passed through braided rope illustrated as 88 at point 90 and braided rope 88 passes through braided rope 86 at point 92. Thereafter, distal end 82 is turned 90° and passes through the side of ~~[[braid]]~~ braided rope 86 while distal end 84 of ~~[[braid]]~~ braided rope 86 is turned 90° and passes through the side of ~~[[braid]]~~ braided rope 88. When wetted and allowed to dry in the manner discussed above and set forth in detail in Tables A and B, the passed through rope portions of the rope members ~~creates~~ create a highly effective lock.

Please replace the 1st paragraph on page 15 beginning at line 1 with the following amended paragraph:

As illustrated in Fig. 17, the mesh 2' is of a smaller gauge than the net 2 disclosed in Figs. 4 and 5, but nevertheless is comprised in whole or in part of the water soluble yarns disclosed above in tables A and B. The mesh 2' preferably is of the construction disclosed in copending U.S. patent application Serial No. 09/012,427 filed on January 22, 1998 in the name of John Rexroad and entitled "Method of Using Barrier Material and System" which application being commonly signed with the present invention and being hereby

incorporated by reference. The mesh 2' is installed as a barrier such as in a ball pit where children play or other children's play unit. The left side of the L-shaped frame 5 of Fig. 17 shows a lashed in place connection 130 while the bottom run of the L-shaped frame includes plastic tie wrap connections 132. The mesh is a knotted mesh shown in a square orientation but could also be in a diamond orientation.

Please replace the 3rd paragraph on page 15 beginning at line 21 with the following amended paragraph:

By the foregoing, an improved shrink net system and article has been described by way of the preferred embodiment. ~~However~~ However, numerous modifications and substitutions may be had without departing from the spirit of the invention. ~~Accordingly~~ Accordingly, the invention has been described by way of illustration rather than limitation.